

DECLASSIFIED
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HISTORY

462ND FIGHTER SQUADRON (SE)

506TH FIGHTER GROUP (SE)

VII FIGHTER COMMAND, ARMY AIR FORCES,
PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS & TWENTIETH AIR FORCE

1 APRIL 1945

THROUGH

30 APRIL 1945

P.R.C.

50-41-462-HI
(Apr-45)

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Dir. 5200.39

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UNIT HISTORY

462ND FIGHTER SQUADRON (SS)
500TH FIGHTER GROUP (SS) APO 86
VII FIGHTER COMMAND
ARMY AIR FORCES, PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
&
TWENTIETH AIR FORCE

P.R.C

1 APRIL 1945
through
30 APRIL 1945

George H. Olson
GEORGE H. OLSON
1st Lt. Air Corps
Historical Officer

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162ND FIGHTER SQUADRON (SE)
 506TH FIGHTER GROUP (SE) APO 86
 VII FIGHTER COMMAND
 ARMY AIR FORCES, PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
 &
 TWENTIETH AIR FORCE

1. a. Ground Echelon --- arrived Eniwetok Harbor, 6 April 1945, departed 16 April 1945; arrived Saipan anchorage, 28 April 1945, departed 21 April 1945; arrived Iwo Jima 24 April 1945, disembarked 25 April 1945.
- b. Air Echelon --- Mac Field #4, Tinian.
2. None.
3. None.
4. None.
5. Strength, 1 April 1945: 54 officers, 254 EN.
 Strength, 30 April 1945: 58 officers, 254 EN.
6. Planes on hand, 1 April 1945: 25 P-51D's.
 Planes on hand, 30 April 1945: 25 P-51D's.
7. Losses: One (1) P-51D - emergency crash landing.

George H. Olson
 GEORGE H. OLSON
 1st Lt, Air Corps
 Historical Officer

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UNIT HISTORY
 462nd Fighter Squadron (SE)
 506th Fighter Group (SE)
 APO #86

VII Fighter Command; Army Air Forces, Pacific Ocean Areas; Twentieth Air Force
 1-30 April 45

PART I - GROUND ECHELON

The beginning of April found personnel of the ground echelon at sea, en route to Eniwetok in the Marshalls. On Easter Sunday the International Date Line was crossed, and everyone was pleased with the novel idea of drawing Army pay for a day which never existed.

The pleasant routine of the trip was broken only by one submarine alert which was adjudged to be the real thing, ashcans being dropped by a convoy escort vessel which attempted to track the enemy sub with listening devices. This proved ineffective and within the hour the escort vessel had rejoined convoy formation.

During this part of the voyage several meetings of supply officers of the squadrons were held with Captain Story, Group Materiel Officer, who outlined supply policies to be followed upon arrival at the destination.

On 6 April 1945 we reached the barren atoll of Eniwetok, and threaded our way through the multitude of ships in the harbor. Then began a nerve-wracking ten day wait. Mail was brought aboard at no time during this protracted stay, which added to the general drop in morale. There was general agreement with the thought of a famous sign on Eniwetok, constructed by weary G.I.'s, "Intel Atoll - No liquor atoll, no women atoll, nuthin atoll!!"

However, parties of both officers and enlisted men were sent ashore to visit the few recreational facilities, several officers of the squadron finding the liquor at the Central Pacific Officer's Club more than a little to their liking, while swimming and beer were available to enlisted men on nearby Perry Island.

Noteworthy was the brief appearance on the scene of a U.S. battleship

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of the "IOWA" class; the war seemed to be getting nearer.

On the 16th, in smaller convey, we sailed for Saipan in the Marianas. Arriving at Garapan Harbor on the 20th the squadron witnessed a spectacular demonstration buzz greeting by pilots of the air echelon, flying from nearby Tinian. Mail in huge quantities came aboard, also, and these two factors went far to heighten spirits. It was at this time that Captain Luptons, 462nd Operations Officer, Captain Dieter, 462nd Engineering Officer, and Captain R. T. Miller, a 462nd Flight leader, went ashore with one enlisted propeller specialist to join the air echelon. Captain Luptons was relieved of his duties as acting commanding officer of the squadron, (1) and 1st Lt Carter assumed command.

The stay at Saipan was short, and on the following morning, 21 April, we sailed for recently-captured Iwo Jima in the Volcano Group. The suspense of guessing as to our destination was over, and we were happy to know that soon we could be hitting the Jap homeland from such an advanced base. The morning of the 24th gave us our first glimpse of the black, sulphurous rock which was to be our home for a time.

During the remainder of that day we lay at anchor, witnessing the tremendous amount of activity on shore and hearing lurid tales of enemy action on the island from those coming aboard. Advance parties were dispatched to arrange for debarkation. Ship's crane and landing craft personnel worked together unceasingly throughout the night in unloading operations. Debarkation of troops occurred via LST the following morning, 25 April 1945, and we set foot on the black sands of Iwo.

The orderly inactivity of shipboard life was soon sharply contrasted with the flurry of uncoordinated activity ashore. Disorganization in the living area was general and extensive, which was to be expected. However, much of this disorganization could have been avoided had a more adequate direction been given to the un-

(1) Order No. 14, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 20 April 1945

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loading of supplies in the group storage area. Each unit's supplies were indiscriminately mixed with every other unit's supplies, though segregation of unit property had been readily possible at the time of unloading.

In the resultant confusion of setting up a living area the squadron came close to losing its identity, with men from all units of the group co-mingled. Gradually, however, areas were designated and the miscellaneous hodge-podge of pup tents, wall tents, and pyramids gave way to a more orderly arrangement of pyramids for officers and squad tents for enlisted men.

A squadron orderly room was soon established, latrines were constructed and a sanitation program begun, and a temporary dispensary was set up to handle sick call. Messing facilities were confined to the issuance of 6 rations and an occasional K ration plus the making of big pots of coffee for the morning meal. The food was not an unwelcome change for the majority of the squadron personnel who were eager to get away from that "Bismontain hold flavor."

A sizeable quantity of mail arrived to make the situation better. Censorship of outgoing mail was outlined upon several occasions by the squadron S-2 officers, and the cooperation of all men in complying with censorship regulations was excellent.

Security measures taken were limited to the posting of interior and exterior guards. A considerable amount of gunfire was to be heard on any night, emanating from over-imaginative and inexperienced guards of our own organization, and from other units on the island. A lone Jap was fired upon in the early morning of April 28th by Lt McClure and enlisted men of the 462nd, the enemy escaping to a later death by Infantry fire near the shoreline. Movement in the squadron area after dark was somewhat hazardous during the closing days of April, and the whistling of "Yankee Doodle" became standard operating procedure when traveling to the latrine.

Criticism might be made of the lack of other security measures enforced. No organized attempt was made to insure the safety of personnel from enemy air attack

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which was a very real potential threat at that time. Although a similar Air Corps outfit had withstood a 'Banani' charge and suffered heavy casualties in a nearby area less than a month before, enlisted men of the squadron were denied any remuneration for their weapons until almost a week after landing.

The last of April found most activity of the squadron directed at construction of suitable living areas, with plans underway for the construction of mess halls, showers, etc., the air strip being far from completed at this time. 'Officer Country' was established on a hill top just behind the spot known as 'Bloody Ridge.'

On 25 April 1945 Major DeFurco received command of the squadron, vice
(2)
1st Lt Carter, relieved.

Strength of the 462nd Fighter Squadron as of 1 April 1945 was 64 officers
(3)
and 254 enlisted men. As of 30 April 1945 strength of the organization remained
(4)
the same. However, part of this strength complement was on DG at APO 247, with which PART II now concerns itself.

PART II - AIR SURRELON

April, at Tinian, was an especially busy time for members of the air echelon with supply being the paramount problem. West Field #4, on which our planes were based, had no provision for P-51 supply, and the Army Garrison Force with headquarters on the field could be of little help. AAFPC on nearby Saipan might well have been non-existent for all the help provided by it. The peculiar 'orphan' nature of the organization after abandonment by the 38th Fighter Wing made 'scrambling' necessary as well as legitimate begging from Navy units at North Field. B-29 units cooperated insofar as their parts and supplies would apply to the radically dissimilar P-51. The 313th Bomb Wing agreed to order parts for the group, with the Navy agreeing to draw from its stocks upon presentation of an AAF certificate cleared through the B-29 maintenance depot. Credits to the Navy units and the VBS units on Tinian which

- (2) Order No. 16, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 25 April 1945.
(3) Morning Report, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 1 April 1945.
(4) Morning Report, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 30 April 1945.

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operated so wholeheartedly in so critical a time.

During this time the squadron was compelled to perform maintenance on 26 airplanes with but 25 enlisted airplane mechanics, 2 armorer, and 1 radio man. Some work on the maintenance of the airplanes was performed by the flying officers. 1st Lt Sullivan acted as Engineering Officer until relieved by Captain Dieter on 28 April 1945. The percentage of aircraft operational during the month was high, running in the neighborhood of 80%.

Overhauling of the aircraft was accomplished by the First Air Corps Repair Unit (Flooting). Installation of BU equipment was also accomplished by this agency, under the supervision of Captain Holloway, VII Fighter Command communications expert, who arrived at Tinian 22 April 1945.

Prior to 28 April the squadron flew several day CAP missions, at which time it was relieved of this mission by fighters of a Navy carrier. Aircraft of the 462nd participated in a number of AA tracking missions, as well as in simulated strafing runs on Tinian automatic weapon positions.

One accident was recorded for this period of flying, an emergency crash landing by Lt McCall in which the pilot escaped serious injury but in which the plane was demolished. The accident was attributed to engine failure shortly after take-off.

Apart from the intensive work the enlisted men of the squadron found time to develop a championship football team, winning all of the ten games played in competition with teams of the 457th, 458th squadrons, as well as with other units on Tinian. Morale in the squadron was high, a condition abetted by especially good food.

Strength of the air echelon as of 1 April 1945 was 25 officers and 29

(3)

Enlisted Men. As of 28 April 1945, this was increased to 27 Officers and 29

(4)

Enlisted Men.

(3) Morning Report, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 1 April 1945.

(4) Morning Report, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 30 April 1945.

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APPENDIX

List of Exhibits

- Exhibit (1) Order No. 14, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 20 April 1945.
- Exhibit (2) Order No. 16, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 26 April 1945.
- Exhibit (3) Morning Report, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 1 April 1945.
- Exhibit (4) Morning Report, 462nd Fighter Squadron, 30 April 1945.

Exhibit (1)

462D FIGHTER SQUADRON
APO 18236 c/o Postmaster
San Francisco, California

20 April 1945

ORDER)
No 14))

ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND

The undersigned hereby assumes command of the 462d Fighter Squadron,
508th Fighter Group SE, APO 18236 c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, California
vice Captain STUART B. LUMPKINS relieved.

/s/ Roland E. Carter, Jr.
ROLAND E. CARTER, JR.,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Commanding.

A TRUE COPY:


THOMAS M. LILLARD, JR.,
2d Lt., Air Corps,
Adjutant.

Exhibit (2)

462D FIGHTER SQUADRON
506th Fighter Group
APO 36.

ORDER)
:
Number 16)

26 April 1945

ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND

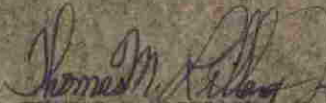
Under the provisions of paragraph 6, AR 600-20, the undersigned hereby assumes command of 462d Fighter Squadron, 506th Fighter Group, vice 1st Lt. ROLAND E. CARTER, JR., relieved.

/s/ Thomas D. De Jarnette
THOMAS D. DE JARNETTE,
Major, Air Corps,
Commanding.

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462d Ftr Sq S-2 (4 cys)

A TRUE COPY:


THOMAS M. LILLARD, JR.,
2d Lt., Air Corps,
Adjutant.

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1 NOVEMBER 1944

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